



APPROVED
SUMMARIZED MINUTES

**CITY OF SCOTTSDALE
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING**

Thursday, March 21, 2019

**KIVA – CITY HALL
3939 N. DRINKWATER BOULEVARD
SCOTTSDALE, AZ 85251**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair called the regular meeting of the Scottsdale Transportation Commission to order at 5:15 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Barry Graham, Chair
Pamela Iacovo, Vice Chair
Don Anderson
George Ertel
Renee Higgs
Michael Kuzel
B. Kent Lall

STAFF: Paul Basha, Transportation Director
Frances Cookson, Staff Representative
Lisa Johnson, Transportation Planning and Transit Operations Manager
Rommel Cordova, Management Assistant to City Council
Phillip Kercher, Traffic Engineering and Operations Manager
Nick Molinari, Operations Supervisor, McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park
Lieutenant Bob Bonnette
Sergeant Wesley Schaffer, Police Department

GUESTS: Michael J. Cynecki, PE, PTOE, Lee Engineering
Mark T. Gavan, PE, Gavan & Barker

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair invited public comments. There were none.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Meeting of the Transportation Commission – February 21, 2019

Chair called for comments or changes. Commissioner provided a correction to a motion on page 5.

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON MOVED TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION ON FEBRUARY 21, 2019 AS AMENDED. COMMISSIONER ERTEL SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED 7-0 WITH CHAIR GRAHAM, VICE CHAIR IACOVO AND COMMISSIONERS ANDERSON, ERTEL, HIGGS, KUZEL AND LALL VOTING IN THE AFFIRMATIVE WITH NO DISSENTING VOTES.

5. ANNUAL BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS APPRECIATION RECEPTION

Rommel Cordova, Management Assistant to City Council, invited Commissioners to attend the Boards and Commissions Appreciation reception on May 16th at the Scottsdale Airport.

6. MCCORMICK RAILROAD PARK PEDESTRIAN CROSSING ON INDIAN BEND

Phillip Kercher, Traffic Engineering and Operations Manager, discussed the Indian Bend Crossing Study and recommendations at the location adjacent to the McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park. The park is located at the southeast corner of Indian Bend Road and Scottsdale Road. The intersection is signalized with approximately 18,650 vehicles per day on the designated portion of roadway. Most amenities are on the east or south side of the park. The signal at the Scottsdale Road intersection does not provide significant benefit for pedestrians wishing to access the park. There are no access points onto Scottsdale Road for either driveways on Indian Bend.

A shopping center is located on the north side of Indian Bend across from the park. Some people park at the shopping center and then decide to visit the park. They have a tendency to run across the street. Other park visitors cross the street to visit shops and restaurants. During large events, the City holds an easement on the north side of the park, which allows visitors to use the parking area. The movement of pedestrians is facilitated by the police department, which sets up temporary crossings using lights, cones and temporary traffic control devices. Many people do not realize there is an existing underpass between the parking lot on the north side and the park parking lot. Over the years, there have been many requests to install a traffic signal at one of the park driveways to help facilitate event pedestrian traffic.

Michael J. Cynecki, PE, PTOE, Lee Engineering and Mark T. Gavan, PE, Gavan & Barker, were hired to perform a thorough analysis to look at three options:

- Make improvements to the underpass to make it more desirable for pedestrian movement
- Evaluate whether a traffic signal is warranted
- Make recommendations to enhance pedestrian crossings

Observations of the vehicular and pedestrian traffic conditions were made on Saturday, December 8th during the park's Festival of Lights Holiday event.

Mr. Cynecki discussed the study, noting that new developments will be coming on the southwest corner which will add traffic both on Indian Bend and in the area in general. The street was measured at 62 feet wide, being wider in some areas with a right turn pocket. Traffic volumes are quite high. The speed limit is 40 miles per hour and there is a speeding issue on the street. There are four lanes, two in each direction, plus bike lanes. There is a short median (270 feet) in one portion of the area, seven feet wide. The eastern driveway to the park is one-quarter mile from Scottsdale Road. Photographs and park details were reviewed.

The study examined the crash history on Indian Bend Road for five years (2013-2017), which concluded the absence of a significant crash history in the segment. There were eight total crashes over the five-year period. Traffic counts were performed December 8th at noon and in the evening, covering four access points to the park. From 11:00 to 1:00 at Location A, there were 18 crossings; 4 crossings at location B, 2 crossings at the underpass and 1 at the final crossing.

For special events, two police officers are used from 6:00 to 9:30. The officers indicated there were 500 one-way crossings at one point. They bring in portable light standards as well as changeable message signs. They create a crosswalk with use of cones. In the evening, the shopping center at the west driveway will put out "No event parking" signs to discourage parking. Also noted in the area were a high number of U-turn maneuvers, which did not seem to represent a major disruption to traffic.

There are nine warrants contained in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. Meeting a warrant does not require installation of a signal, however, if a location does not meet a warrant, a signal should not be considered at the location. The City requested that the area be studied for warrant quality control. The primary warrant is the eight-hour warrant (Warrant 1), which means that out of the 24 hours, the minimal volume criteria has to be met in eight of the hours. Traffic volumes did not meet Warrant 1.

Warrant 2 constitutes a four-hour vehicular volume. Traffic volumes did not meet Warrant 2. Warrant 3 has a peak hour component. Traffic volumes did not meet Warrant 3. Warrant 4 applies to pedestrian volume. For special event volumes, the warrant is met. However, the warrant particularly states that it must be based on average day traffic, not special conditions. As such, volumes did not meet Warrant 4. Some warrants were not applicable. Of those that were, no warrant qualifications were met.

The study also looked at the area for application of a pedestrian hybrid beacon (PHB). The existing volumes meet the requirements for this. Mr. Gavan discussed potential upgrades to the underpass, including ADA compliance, improvements to the south side entrance, higher level improvements to the south side entrance and a concept for more direct underpass access to the Seville Shopping Center.

Mr. Cynecki discussed advantages and disadvantages of a PHB at the east driveway, which would provide a red light to stop traffic and include improved nighttime lighting. For the west driveway, they considered a rectangular rapid flashing beacon, however there are no warrants allowing agencies to install the beacon. If the City chose to install it, they would have to include a median island. It would cost less than a pedestrian hybrid beacon and would serve lunchtime crossers on the west side. One of the disadvantages is that it is a warning beacon and not a red light. The Federal Highway Administration provided revised guidance (not a requirement,

but guidance), in 2018 in terms of what types of crossings to use where. For the conditions present at the location, the rectangular rapid flashing beacon is not recommended. Potential costs for options were reviewed.

Overall recommendations include:

- Upgrade the underpass to be more user-friendly
- Installation of a PHB at the east driveway
- Continue to use police traffic control for special events
- Evaluate a possible PHB at the west shopping center driveway
- Discourage mid-block crossings with "No pedestrian crossing" signs
- Install a gate for the emergency access driveway to the park
- Covert high-pressure sodium lights to LEDs
- Remove the centerline on the north sidewalk, making the sidewalk more pedestrian friendly. There are existing bike lanes.
- Install no U-turn signs at either end of the raised median island on Indian Bend Road

Commissioner commented that the striping is a continuation of the existing greenbelt path and marks the end of the two-way multiuse path at Scottsdale Road.

Commissioner commented that since so few people realize the underpass is present, upgrades to highlight the feature are needed. Even so, most people will take the path of least resistance and the faster route across Indian Bend Road. In terms of the PHB, this is not a location for a significant pedestrian problem. There are other City locations with more significant issues all year round.

Commissioner commented that upgrades to the underpass are expensive and there is no guarantee they would increase use. It would appear that a PHB approach is best. He suggested the possibility of installing guardrails to prevent street crossing at prohibited locations. Mr. Cynecki said the guardrails could not be extended beyond the raised median because of driveway access.

Commissioner commented that the study reveals there are no extraordinary safety issues involved. As such, pedestrians should be able to continue crossing to their destination as they feel safe to do so. To attract them to use the underpass, perhaps signage could be installed to emphasize the underpass as the safest crossing route. The City has significant traffic issues that require funding; perhaps the money would be better spent where there is greater need. Phillip Kercher, Traffic Engineering and Operations Manager, commented that the main impetus for the study were the comments of the officers who work at the temporary crossing. The number of events at the park has grown significantly, including ten summer concerts, 30 holiday event days and five to ten additional events. The events typically occur during nighttime conditions.

Lieutenant Bonnette commented that the total number of violations on a weeklong deployment in an area of the City is approximately 300 to 500. This area yields 1,262 violations. Of these, over one thousand were speeding by 11 to 15 miles per hour. Arizona leads the nation in pedestrian fatalities. This is one of the busiest parks in the City.

Discussion ensued regarding the City's ownership of an easement of the Seville Parking lot for overflow parking. Commissioner pointed out that there have been no pedestrian deaths at the

park. Lieutenant Bonnette stated that the goal is not to affect the statistics with the activities at one park in the City.

Commissioner commented that since the traffic light is not being considered, none of the other solutions suggested will affect speeding in the area. Lieutenant Bonnette said that having another traffic device within the long stretch of roadway does help slow drivers down. Mr. Kercher added that having a traffic control device with lighting will greatly improve conditions at night.

Commissioner commented that he would like to see the use of technology rather than reliance upon police officer presence.

Commissioner agreed with the importance of utilization of proactive safety measures. He suggested utilizing the funding which has gone to pay police overtime for installation of a PHB, thus eliminating the need for the police presence. If the police presence is still required, the purpose has not been achieved. Lieutenant Bonnette stated that over time, police presence could likely be phased out.

Commissioner commented that use of the park will increase with opening of the Ritz Carlton as well as other increased development in the area. Spending \$140,000 to install a PHB in order to save a life is good use of those funds.

In response to a Commissioner question, Nick Molinari, Operations Supervisor at the park, stated that the Park went through a master plan update last year, divided into two phases. Phase 1 will include parking flow on the west side the parking lot and replace one indoor building. Phase 2 will add a spray pad water feature. The enhancements are intended to drive attendance and utilization of the park during the low use times. Generally speaking, parking at the Park is at capacity from mid to late October through mid April.

Commissioner inquired as to consideration of serving the traffic via the trollies. Paul Basha, Transportation Director, said the idea of serving the park with trollies has been discussed. Anticipated use would be minimal.

Commissioner commented that even with some of the technological solutions, there will still need to be police officers present to enforce laws and guide pedestrians. Vice Chair commented that there is not always a good answer for keeping people safe.

In response to a question from Chair, Mr. Basha stated that the underpass was constructed during the mid to late 1980's. It was not originally constructed as an undercrossing but as a drainage structure, which was used for a pedestrian crossing. Mr. Molinari confirmed that it does fill with water during periods of rain.

In response to a question from Chair, Mr. Basha stated that the City has explored the possibility of adding parking spaces at the site, but it is not feasible at this point.

Commissioner suggested the possibility of an overpass from the park to the overflow parking area. Commissioner commented that the approach would be cost prohibitive.

7. 2018 AND 2019 COLLISION FATALITIES

Mr. Basha stated that on March 14th, City Council had a retreat to discuss topics of timely importance. One of these listed topics was “Improved public safety through reducing accidents and improving preparedness.” Assistant Police Chief Scott Popp and the Mr. Basha responded to City Council questions on this topic. There were 19 fatal collisions in CY 2018 in Scottsdale and three in 2019. The collision locations were identified on aerial photographs. Since 1990, the median (50th percentile) intersection collision rate in the City has remained relatively steady at 0.5 collisions per million vehicles. While collisions are rare, the City sees an average of ten to 15 collisions per day.

Mr. Basha provided detailed information on the seven pedestrian collisions, including location, traffic and specific event details. Two of the cases were ruled suicides, as the pedestrian was not walking, but chose to lie down in the middle of the street.

In response to a Commissioner question, Mr. Basha stated that collision rates are calculated based on a million vehicles entering intersections. The segment collision rate occurs between major intersections. The median collision rate has remained relatively consistent for approximately 30 years.

Mr. Basha provided details on the only bicycle fatality accident for CY 2018 and the first three months of 2019. Details were also provided for the single vehicle collisions in the City, including instances where drivers drifted from the roadway and were killed when they collided with a pole, embankment or tree.

Commissioner inquired as to extenuating circumstances in these accidents, such as failing to wear a seatbelt. Mr. Basha stated that more collision reports do provide information on seatbelt use and airbag deployment, however in the interest of time, staff chose not to provide that level of detail in the presentation.

In response to a Commissioner question, Mr. Basha stated that there are approximately two dozen separate accident type categories.

Commissioner inquired as to the percentage of passengers in fatal collisions who were wearing seatbelts at the time of the accident. Mr. Basha stated that they could certainly study the data to determine these statistics. It is notable that seatbelt use in the country and particularly in Scottsdale has been increasing dramatically since they were first invented in the 1960's.

Commissioner commented that he recently learned that according to Arizona law, passengers are not required to wear seatbelts and police are unable to provide enforcement unless they stop the vehicle for some other reason. Even if they are cited, the fine is only \$10. Mr. Basha shared the Legislature's reasoning that most intelligent people use seatbelts all the time and do not need the government to dictate this rule. That is the reason for the lax laws in Arizona. In some states, police officers are free to stop and cite a driver for failure to wear a seatbelt while driving.

Mr. Basha continued with descriptions of individual accidents in the City.

In response to a Commissioner comment, Mr. Basha explained that positive offset simply means that drivers in vehicles in opposing left turn directions should be able to see past the opposite vehicle.

Commissioner inquired as to the cost difference of installing a roundabout as opposed to a traffic light. Mr. Basha said that generally speaking, a newly constructed roundabout at a location that has no traffic control costs approximately the same as installation of a traffic signal at a location with no current controls. The dominant cost savings advantage for roundabouts is the absence of turn lanes. A conversion from a traffic signal to a roundabout can be quite expensive, ranging from \$500,000 to \$1 million.

Commissioner commented that roundabouts sometimes require the acquisition of adjacent property for installation. Mr. Basha stated that traffic signals may require more property, because you have so many lanes may be required. A roundabout has fewer lanes.

Mr. Basha continued by discussing photograph enforcement in the City as a method of reducing collisions. The method has been employed in the City since 1996. The Commission's May meeting will include a presentation by Sam Taylor. He is studying 11 locations in the City of Scottsdale where there are pedestrian crossings without benefit of any traffic control, to determine if there are any crossing treatments that should be employed to ensure safe pedestrian travel. The City is also coordinating with Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG), to study an additional seven locations for pedestrian crossing treatments through a grant funding program.

The City has hired an expert consultant in the field of highway safety. He has developed a very sophisticated statistical technique to examine all collisions in Scottsdale since 2010. The technique predicts collisions based on traffic volumes and other roadway characteristics. He will identify locations where the actual collision experience is greater than the predicted collision experience. This would be an indication of something peculiar occurring at such locations. The locations will be examined, followed by planning to develop an improvement to the intersection or street segment to reduce collisions. It is hoped to have the analysis to be complete by July 1st, as this is when the funding runs out. The Commission will be provided the results of the study in the fall.

Commissioner commented on the higher prevalence of fatal accidents in the southern portion of the City. Mr. Basha stated that fatal collisions occur throughout the City, however, more occur in the southern part of the City, as it includes much higher traffic volume as well as density of streets. Overall, traffic collisions are infrequent and irregular. The Department prefers to have five years of data before it draws any conclusions or judgments. Anything less than three years of collision data is considered statistically undefined.

In response to a Commissioner question, Mr. Basha stated that collision rates are not higher in the southern portion of the City. The higher number simply reflects volume and density. High collision rate locations are scattered throughout the City.

Vice Chair inquired as to whether photo enforcement would assist in determining near misses. Mr. Basha stated that it is virtually impossible to predict or measure near collisions. However, the locations of photo enforcement cameras have a statistically significantly lower collision rate than locations where photo enforcement is not present. Locations near photo enforcement also reflect a reduction in collisions, though not as great.

Chair thanked Mr. Basha for the presentation, noting that the accidents are so difficult to predict because the vast majority are due to distracted driving events.

8. OTHER TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS AND PROGRAM STATUS

Mr. Basha stated MAG is requesting that all residents complete a survey regarding transportation issues and concerns. He encouraged Commissioners and others to complete the survey. Commissioner suggested using social media to get the word out.

9. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments.

10. COMMISSION IDENTIFICATION OF FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Due to a conflict with the Boards and Commissions appreciation event held on May 16th, the Commission will hold its next meeting on May 23, 2019.

Chair noted that the Commission had been previously scheduled to discuss City Council's CIP Subcommittee suggestions. This item was removed from the Commissioner's agenda. The Commission looks forward to being part of that process and discussion in the future.

12. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Basha informed Commissioners that the April meeting will occur at the Traffic Management Center.

13. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, being duly moved by Commissioner Lall and seconded by Commissioner Kuzel, the meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

AYES: Chair Graham, Vice Chair Iacovo, Commissioners Ertel, Anderson, Higgs, Kuzel and Lall.

NAYS: None

SUBMITTED BY:

eScribers, LLC

***Note: These are summary action meeting minutes only. A complete copy of the audio/video recording is available at <http://www.scottsdaleaz.gov/boards/transp.asp>**